

PYROSOMA PHOSPHORESCENS.



CHARACTER GENERICUS.

Corpus liberum, oblongo-tubulosum, gelatinosum, altera extremitate apertum.

CHARACTER SPECIFICUS, &c.

PYROSOMA hyalino-virescens, papillosum, ore intus crenato.

PYROSOMA Atlanticum.

Peron. ann. du mus. nation. d'hist. nat.

No. 24. p. 437. t. 72.

De eleganti hoc marino animali primus vere et accurate scripsisse videtur Dominus Peronus, in opere cui titulus “*Annales du Museum National d'Histoire Naturelle.*” Illas incolit maris Atlantici partes quæ circulo æquinoctiali dirimuntur, gregatim radens interdum summas àquas, interdum natans altius submersum. Otiosum et quiescens, ut plurimum sordido-virescit, seu flavescit; simul atque autem sese moverit, fit phosphoro-splendidissimum, singulo contracti corporis actu laminæ si-

millimum ferreæ cum ab igni plene incanduerit; singulis autem laxati et extensi vicibus per varios gradus rubri, aurantii, flavi, leviter cærulei transiens, donec tandem ad colorem naturalem, hyalino nempe virescentem redierit. Superficies externa plurimis papillis seu processibus conicis obsita est: interna constat e membrana molli et reticulata, sine ullo visibili intestinorum vestigio. De modo vivendi et sobolem propagandi nihil pro certo conpertum est; probabile tamen est alimentum ei subministrari eodem modo quo hydræ; absorpto nempe succo prædæ prius inclusæ et dein ab ore ejectæ. Magnitudinem iconis in tabula expressæ sæpius exsuperat *Pyrosoma phosphorescens*.

RPM. *Pu. 42*

THE
PHOSPHORIC PYROSOMA.



GENERIC CHARACTER.

Body nayant, oblong, tubular, gelatinous, open
at one extremity.

SPECIFIC CHARACTER, &c.

Greenish-hyaline, papillose PYROSOMA, with
the mouth crenated within.

PYROSOMA.

Peron annales du Mus. Nat. d'Hist. Nat.
No. 24. p. 437.

This elegant marine animal seems to have been first distinctly described by Mons. Peron, in the work entitled “*Annales du Museum National d'Histoire Naturelle.*” It is a native of the equatorial parts of the Atlantic ocean, where it is sometimes seen in vast numbers, both floating on the surface, and swimming at considerable distances beneath. When in a state of perfect inaction or repose, it is usually

of a dull greenish or yellow cast, and semitransparent; but when in action, is distinguished by a very high degree of phosphoric splendor, exhibiting, during each contraction of its body, the appearance of a bar of iron in the highest degree of incandescence, and, during each relaxation, passing thro' all the gradations of red, orange, yellow, pale-blue, &c. till at length it returns to its first greenish-hyaline aspect. It is externally beset with numerous conical elongations or papillæ, and within appears to be lined merely by a smooth vascular or reticular membrane, without any appearance of intestines, &c. Nothing particular is known relative to its manner of feeding, production of young, &c. It is however probable that it is nourished in the manner of the Polype, viz. by the absorption of the juices of its inclosed prey, which is afterwards ejected by the mouth or opening. In size it often greatly exceeds the figure represented in the annexed plate.